

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

San Diego, California

***United States Attorney
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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - April 10, 2006

United States Attorney Carol C. Lam announced that United States District Court Judge M. James Lorenz today sentenced Ilyas Ali in federal district court in San Diego to serve 57 months in custody, followed by 5 years of supervised release for his role in an international drugs-for-weapons transaction. Ali previously pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to distribute heroin and hashish, and one count of conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists.

In connection with his previous guilty pleas, Ali admitted that he conspired with codefendants Muhammed Abid Afridi and Syed Mustajab Shah to distribute approximately five metric tons of hashish and 600 kilograms of heroin originating in Pakistan to undercover United States law enforcement officers. Additionally, Ali admitted that he and his codefendants sought to receive, as partial payment for the drugs, four “Stinger” anti-aircraft missiles which they intended to sell to the Taliban, an organization they knew at the time to be the same as Al-Qaeda.

According to the indictment, on September 15, 2002, Shah, Afridi and Ali traveled from Karachi, Pakistan, to Hong Kong, People’s Republic of China, to meet with undercover law enforcement officers from

the United States to negotiate for the sale of large quantities of hashish and heroin. On September 16, 2002, Shah, Afridi and Ali agreed that the purchase price of 5 metric tons of hashish and 600 kilograms of heroin could be offset against the cost of 4 “Stinger” anti-aircraft missiles. On September 18, 2002, at a hotel in Hong Kong, Shah, Afridi, and Ali told undercover agents that they intended to sell the “Stinger” anti-aircraft missiles, discussed during the previous meeting, to members of the Taliban, which they indicated was the same as Al-Qaeda.

According to Assistant United States Attorneys Michael P. Skerlos and Todd Robinson, who prosecuted the case, Shah, Afridi and Ali were arrested in Hong Kong on September 20, 2002, by Chinese law enforcement authorities, at the request of the United States Government. They were indicted by a federal Grand Jury on October 30, 2002.

United States Attorney Lam said, “This case is a stark reminder of the ever present threat posed by people who scheme to provide support to terrorists.”

Muhammed Abid Afridi was sentenced to 57 months before Judge Lorenz on April 3, 2006. Afridi previously pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to distribute heroin and hashish, and one count of conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists.

Syed Mustajab Shah is scheduled to appear before Judge Lorenz for sentencing on June 19, 2006, at 8:30 a.m. following his plea of guilty on March 30, 2006, to felony charges of conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists and conspiracy to distribute heroin and hashish.

DEFENDANT Ilyas Ali

Case Number: 02CR2912-L

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

- Count 1: Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a) and 846 - Conspiracy to distribute heroin and hashish - Maximum Penalties: Life in prison, \$4,000,000.00 fine
- Count 3: Title 18, United States Code, Sections 2339B(a)(1) and (d) - Providing Material Support to Terrorists - Maximum Penalties: 15 years in prison, \$250,000.00 fine

AGENCY

Federal Bureau of Investigation